



Family Newsletter

Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
Fort Dix, New Jersey



Issue 4

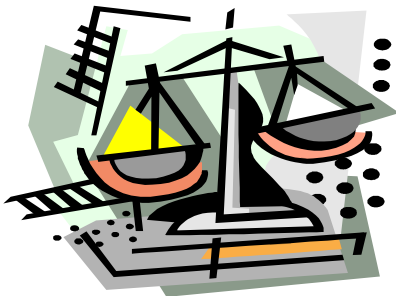
July - September 2002

Preamble

This is the fourth in a series of newsletters designed to provide information to the families of the Fort Dix legal team. Although it is aimed primarily at families of legal personnel, much of the information in this newsletter is applicable to any military family member. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to others who might find this information useful.

If you have any comments on this newsletter, please send them to me at peter.masterton@dix.army.mil.

LTC Pete Masterton
Fort Dix Staff Judge
Advocate



More Mobilized JAGs Report to Fort Dix

This past June we welcomed three new mobilized legal personnel to the Fort Dix Office of the Staff Judge Advocate: MAJ Joe Giblin, CPT Paul Nieves, and SGT Patrick Uket. They are part of a "plus-up" of the 1079th Garrison Support Unit and are a welcome addition to our legal team. They will be helping us with the legal processing of the thousands of soldiers who are mobilizing at Fort Dix. Please join us in welcoming these three to our Dix legal team!

JAG Summer Picnic

The "Organization Day" picnic for the Fort Dix JAG Office is scheduled for Wednesday, July 17th. All friends and family members of the greater Fort Dix legal team (including reserve JAGs in the area) are welcome to attend. The picnic will be held at the SJA's quarters at 218 Colonial Plaza and will feature great food, and lots of fun and games.

MAJ Matt Adams is in charge of the picnic and is organizing all of the food, fun and games. He can be contacted at (609) 562-6451 if you have any questions.



Estate Planning Kit Available

The Army Legal Assistance Office has made an estate planning kit available for soldiers and family members. Estate planning is an ongoing, continuous process of coordinating your legal and financial well being to acquire, accumulate, preserve, and dispose of your assets and wealth. A well-designed plan provides not only for transfer of property on death, but also considers authorized benefits, the adequacy and flexibility of life insurance, the need for retirement income, and the contingencies of mental or physical disability.

The Estate Planning Tool Kit explains estate planning tools and techniques many military families use. The kit includes information on wills, trusts, insurance, survivor benefits, and taxes.

If you are interested in the kit, you can access it via the JAG Corps public web site at www.jagcnet.army.mil/legal.

New Web Site For Women's And Spouse's Club

The Judge Advocates' Women's and Spouse's Club of Washington, D.C. has created a website for the entire JAG family. You can visit the site at <http://www.jagcnet.army.mil/jagfamily>. In the near future, the site will contain a link to an unofficial site as well.

The official site requires no special permissions or passwords to access and contains hyperlinks to both military and commercial sites of interest to military families such as military housing, Tricare, finance, installation guides, relocation information, and military spouse employment.

The unofficial site is still in the works but the goal is to have a place where the club can post items of personal interest to our family members such as local news, fundraising activities, important dates, birth announcements, recipes, and active duty information relevant to family members (Thrift Savings Plan availability, Servicemembers Group Life Insurance increases, etc.).

Wellness Web Sites

A well-informed patient is a better patient. Patients who learn about wellness and their own conditions, the reasoning goes, are better able to participate in their treatment and follow their doctors' instructions.

The medical departments of each of the military services have worked hard in recent years to provide their beneficiaries with comprehensive medical information on the Internet.

The Army runs a site called Hooah 4 Health at <http://www.hooah4health.com>. The site, maintained by the Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, addresses Army force health protection and readiness requirements, particularly for the reserve components.

The Navy operates two comprehensive health and wellness information Web sites. The Virtual Naval Hospital at <http://www.vnh.org/Patients.html> includes links to hundreds of articles on dozens of topics such as cholesterol, dental care, and pregnancy and family planning. The Navy's Lifelines Web site, <http://www.lifelines2000.org/services/medical/index.asp>, also includes health-related information. The site includes links to practical information such as when to call the pediatrician about a child's illness, how to find online information on military medical treatment facilities, and how to update Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System information.

The Air Force maintains a general information site called Crossroads that has a health information section at <http://www.afcrossroads.com/medical/index.cfm>. A link to the Center of Excellence for Medical Multimedia at <http://cemm.org/index.asp> is billed as a resource for Air Force medical professionals, but it's useful for patients as well. Click on the "products" button along the left side, for instance, and links appear to interactive single-topic Web sites that include in-depth looks at pregnancy and childbirth, tonsil and adenoid surgery, arthroscopic knee surgery, and colonoscopy and sigmoidoscopy.

Experts caution that medical information found on the Internet is not always accurate and is no substitute for a doctor's care. Information gleaned from reliable sources and sites, however, can be helpful in allaying patients' fears and help them make informed decisions about their own health care, they advised.

TRICARE Help Newsletter

The TRICARE Help E-mail Service (THEMS), THEMS is a free e-mail service that provides quick answers to TRICARE questions. The newsletter is operated by the US Army Medical Command in San Antonio, Texas. NOTE: This newsletter is available online in MS Word format at <ftp://guest:munehx28@139.232.17.15/THEMS0402.doc>. THEMS is available for use by all TRICARE beneficiaries, regardless of military service affiliation.



The US Army Medical Command TRICARE staff respond to most e-mail requests. In some cases, referrals are made to other agencies for a response. For cases referred to other agencies, inquirers are informed who will respond to their inquiries. Information is kept confidential, and they track each e-mail inquiry to ensure answers are provided quickly and professionally.

In most cases, responses are provided within 1 - 2 business days. If an e-mail requires research or referral to other agencies, it may take longer; but, you can expect an interim response within 3 - 5 business days.

The e-mail service can be accessed worldwide from any computer connected to the Internet. The e-mail address is:

TRICARE_help@amedd.army.mil.

TRICARE While Traveling

With the vacation season fast approaching, it is important to know how to access TRICARE benefits while traveling. Denied claims for care received out of the local area account for many denied TRICARE claims. Failure to properly file the claim is one of the most common problems. Here are some pointers to facilitate the processing of your claims:

TRICARE claims must be filed to the claims address for the region in which the patient lives on the date of service. For example: providers in Virginia are accustomed to filing claims to Palmetto GBA in South Carolina. If a patient from Texas gets medical care while on vacation in Virginia, the patient needs to make sure the provider mails the claim to WPS in Wisconsin, not the Palmetto address the provider normally uses.

When you give a provider your address, make sure to provide your home address, not the temporary address where you are visiting. A patient address on the claim that does not match the address in DEERS will

prevent the claim from processing correctly. Prime and Prime Remote enrollees should always seek prior authorization before seeking care while away from home. The only exception to this rule is an emergency. Even in the case of an emergency, the patient or a family member should seek an authorization for treatment as soon as reasonably possible.



When calling for an authorization from outside the local area, it is usually easiest to call the toll free number and speak to a health care finder. Make sure you get the name of the health care finder to whom you are speaking.

It is usually a good idea to call or visit your TRICARE Service Center before you travel. They can explain pertinent local policies. You may need to contact your local telephone company to find out how to access a toll free number from outside the United States.

If you do encounter problems with your claims, please contact either a customer service representative at the TRICARE Service Center or the Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator at the nearest military treatment facility.